

Choosing and Using Your

Electric Skillet



Your electric skillet is a real home-makers' helper.

- **Store it in a convenient place.**
- **Challenge yourself to use it and take advantage of its many features.**

When used to its fullest advantage, the electric fry pan is one of the most useful and versatile cooking appliances you can own. You can fry, bake, warm baby food or rolls, or even pop popcorn in an electric fry pan.

If you have an electric fry pan with a thermostatic control, a lid with a vent, and a rack it uses multiply. Portability and cook-and-serve styling extends its usefulness to dining area, porch or patio, and weekend cabin life.

Today's consumer has a wide range of choices available in small appliances. Whether to buy additional cooking appliances is an important decision for the money-conscious, energy-conscious, and labor-conscious consumer.

Too often, many of us have appliances that we don't use to full capacity because they aren't familiar to us or because they are stored in inconvenient, hard-to-reach places.

Choosing, and then using, an electric fry pan to its fullest capacity can mean substantial savings in money as well as in storage space. If you use an electric fry pan to capacity, you may not have to buy a

number of other small appliances that could cost you around \$200 and require as much as a 12-inch-deep storage shelf more than 8 feet long.

In contrast, you can expect to pay about \$26 for the average electric fry pan. It weighs about 3 pounds and requires a 15-inch by 15-inch by 7-inch storage space.

The following table illustrates the savings that could be made if one electric fry pan were used to capacity instead of buying, using, storing, and moving the twelve different appliance examples. You may be able to think of other appliances that an electric skillet could replace. This illustration is not meant to say that other, specialized appliances don't have a place. If they are used often, perhaps they are good buys for the individuals who own and use them. The purpose in including this information is to alert consumers to alternative uses of many appliances. Appliances owned and those that are being considered for purchase should be evaluated in terms of usefulness. Consider appliances in terms of energy and labor saving factors and the space it takes to store them, as shown in the table.

Appliance	Average cost	Average weight	Average size
		<i>Pounds</i>	<i>Inches</i>
Portable oven	\$ 25.00	8	8 x 14
Popcorn popper	11.00	4	9 x 9 diameter
Slow cooker	30.00	7	10 x 9 diameter
Vegetable steamer	5.97	3	5 x 6 diameter
Pasta cooker	12.00	8	10 x 8 diameter
Omelet pan	9.95	2	8 diameter
Electric casserole	28.00	10	8 x 9 diameter
Griddle	34.95	8	4 x 18 diameter
Chafing dish	25.00	3	11 x 12
Deep fat fryer	45.00	8	10 x 10 diameter
Baby food warmer	9.45	2	8 x 3
Bun warmer	10.99	3	8 x 9 diameter
Total	\$217.30	66	8.2 linear feet by 1 foot high

The "average" figures represent the average of five different makes, models, and styles for each listed appliance.

Design and Features

For specialized needs, there are electric fry pans as small as 8 1/2 inches in diameter, and some as large as 15 inches. The most popular sizes are 11 inches and 12 inches. Square and rectangular models are most popular and provide more cooking surface than round ones. A 10-inch square will give one-quarter more area than a 10-inch round pan.

Finishes

Fry pans today may be made of aluminum, stainless steel, or some combination of stainless steel and aluminum, copper, or carbon steel. Price differences often depend on the material from which the pan is made and the type of finish applied to the exterior and cooking surfaces.

Exteriors vary from plain aluminum or stainless steel to porcelain in a wide variety of decorator colors. Polyamide finishes are less expensive but also less durable than porcelain enamel. The type of material and finish will be noted on the hang tag or manual included with the appliance.

The cooking surface may be of metal or have a non-stick surface. New hard surface, non-stick finishes may permit the use of regular utensils while still providing the easy cleaning properties of non-stick. This type of finish will be noted on the appliance with any special use or care instructions, and those should be followed to assure its long life and satisfactory performance. *Remember: Sharp knives should not be used on a non-stick surface as they may damage the coating.* Once this surface has been marred, pitted, or removed, the appliance loses that convenience feature as hot spots are created and sticking may occur.

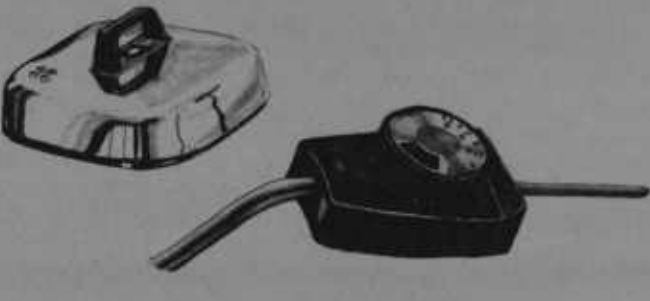
Covers, lids, handles

Covers or lids for fry pans are made either of glass or metal. Some are dome shaped and could be as deep as 5 inches; some are shallow. The dome lids allow space for roasting sizeable cuts of meat or preparation of deeper casseroles and baking such as bundt cakes.

On some models, lids may be secured in a tilt position. Tilting covers helps prevent splattering and allows juices to run back onto foods. This feature frees both hands when turning or checking foods. It also eliminates the necessity of having free counter space to place a hot cover.

Some manufacturers feature a dome-shaped cover with a broiler unit. In these models, the broiler cannot be used at the same time as the unit in the skillet. In some models, the broiler coil detaches for general use; other models require different covers for broiling and regular usage.

To allow the greatest versatility, the lid should have a vent. This should be located away from the cover knob so the user will not be burned from steam escaping when the lid is removed. An adjustable vent allows control over the inside moisture of the foods being prepared.



Handles are generally molded from heat-resistant plastic. Some models have one handle with a short auxiliary handle opposite to use as support when lifting or carrying a full pan. Long handles require more storage space and cause the pan to tip more easily. If only a single handle is attached, it should be a proper length and width to feel well balanced and allow a secure grip. The more popular style is designated a "buffet model." These have two handles on opposite sides to facilitate balance when lifting and carrying. These handles should be located a distance from the pan sides so finger space is adequate to avoid burns when holding a hot, full skillet. A number of models have removable handles to aid in cleaning.

Special features

Special features are available on some models—crockery liners, built-in warming trays beneath the cooking surface making it possible to keep food warm while other food is being cooked in the skillet, a three-piece auxiliary steamer set, and a few feature French fry baskets. Models with the broiler units in the lid come with a broiler rack that can be used as a rack in baking.

Added features generally add cost. Before shopping for expensive additions, make sure they are features you will use enough to merit the additional cost.

Points to look for when buying

No one fry pan can have every feature of performance and convenience. Check this list against models that appeal to you as you shop. In this way, you can select the one that has the greatest number of features you like in relation to needs and cost.

- Size in relation to needs. Singles may find an 8 1/2-inch model a perfect size, while a family wanting to use a fry pan for large quantity cooking may enjoy the extra cooking surface in the 13-inch and 15-inch models. The extra roasting and baking capacity of a deep fry pan with a high-domed lid could be the deciding factor in your choice.

- Attractive cook-and-serve styling. Buffet type handles.

- Exterior finish and cooking surface to suit individual needs and preferences: aluminum, stainless steel, hard surface non-stick, porcelain enamel, or polyamide.

- Removable heat control for complete immersibility of fry pan.

- Heat control easy to remove when hot.

- Thermostatic dial that is easy to use and read. Control knob easy to turn.

- Temperature chart on fry pan handle.

- Heat-resistant handles and legs.

- Sufficient space between pan and buffet handles to prevent burned fingers.

- Well-balanced design.

- Square pan for greater cooking area.

- High dome cover with steam vent; baking rack.

- Signal light to tell when proper temperature has been reached.

- Cover that can be tilted on edge of the pan.

- Warming tray.

Use and care

- Read use and care book carefully and thoroughly before using.

- Before using fry pan for the first time, wash in warm sudsy water, rinse, and wipe dry. If used immediately after washing, dry outlet area before inserting probe. If pan has non-stick finish, season with unsalted fat or salad oil.

- Set dial on OFF, plug heat control into fry pan, then plug cord into appliance outlet.

- Set control to temperature recommended in use and care book. When the indicator light goes off, or on, according to the model, the desired temperature has been reached.

- Preheat fry pan before adding shortening. It is not necessary to grease a non-stick pan, but you may wish to use a little shortening for added flavor and even browning. Also, a little shortening insures the complete release of baked goods.

- Avoid overcrowding of foods when browning. If necessary to brown foods in successive batches, wait for indicator light to go on before adding another batch.

- Follow time and temperature recommendations carefully; modify as your experience dictates. When browning or simmering small amounts of food, lower the temperature setting from 25 to 50 degrees.

- Close the vent for baking or cooking moist foods; open it when browning foods.

- After using fry pan, turn heat control to OFF. Remove cord from outlet and unplug heat control from appliance.

- Wipe heat control with damp cloth. Never immerse heat control in water or let it come in contact with any liquid.

- Handle heat control gently and store carefully. Letting it fall or banging it around in a drawer will upset accurate calibration.

- Never immerse broiler element in water.

- Steel wool pads may be used on an aluminum cooking surface. If aluminum has darkened, a commercial aluminum cleaner may be used. Or boil a solution of 2 tablespoons cream of tartar and 2 quarts of water in the fry pan for 20 minutes. Empty, rinse, and dry.

- Clean bottom of fry pan after each use to prevent buildup of grease.

- Clean stainless steel surfaces with sudsy water, stainless steel cleaner, or if necessary, a fine soap-filled steel wool pad.

- Do not store fry pan in oven. Never use pan in oven; oven temperatures will damage plastic parts of control unit and handles.

Non-stick fry pans

- Let pan cool before washing. To avoid warping, never put cold water in a hot pan.

- Rinse off food residues under hot water faucet or soak in detergent solution if necessary. Then wash with hot sudsy water, rinse, and dry. Occasionally, perhaps weekly, scrub with a plastic or rubber sponge to remove possible buildup of grease or food residues.

- Never use metal scouring pads or steel wool pad on non-stick surfaces.

- When surfaces become stained, as they will in time, clean with a special cleaner available in most hardware and department stores. Then wipe the surface with unsalted cooking fat or salad oil. A neglected build-up of stains can cause loss of the non-stick properties.

- Instead of a commercial cleaner, you may pour 2 cups water and one-half cup liquid household chlorine bleach in the fry pan. Add 1 tablespoon baking soda and mix well. Set heat control at 255 degrees F. and boil gently for 10 minutes. Remove heat control, rinse fry pan, and dry. Then rub cooking surface with unsalted fat or salad oil. This should be used only with non-stick surfaces. Bleach may darken or corrode metal finishes.

Purchase decision

With so many appliances available and many features to consider, making the decision to buy or not to buy another cooking appliance is an important one.

Answers to the following questions will guide your decision for appliance style, model, size, wattage required, interior and exterior finish, price range, color, and other special features.

1. Think first about your cooking problem. Ask: *What kind of cooking needs to be done?*

This will help you determine how an appliance might be used. It will also suggest an appropriate size choice and help you determine if you really want a

skillet or perhaps another appliance. If your cooking problem suggests you need something to help in breakfast preparation, you will want to consider the kinds of breakfast foods you normally serve. An electric skillet is not going to make cold cereal or toast any easier to prepare. It will cook bacon and eggs, pancakes, French toast or coffee cake or other foods you would do on a griddle, in a small oven, or poacher.

2. Next, think about ways your cooking problems could be solved. Ask: *What could be used to do this kind of cooking?*

This will help you identify other appliance alternatives that will do the same kind of cooking. Do you already own a bacon cooker, a griddle, an egg poacher or a toaster oven? If so, you may have many appliances that do the work of an electric skillet for breakfast cooking.

3. Think of the advantages or disadvantages of available alternatives. Ask: *Of all the appliances that would make cooking easier, what about:*

- *size or capacity?*
- *dishwasher safe or immersible?*
- *color or finishes available?*
- *easy to use?*
- *storage?*
- *special features?*
- *cost?*
- *style?*
- *weight?*
- *ease of cleaning?*

4. After the advantages or disadvantages of each appliance have been considered, Ask: *Which appliance will do the kind of cooking I need to do and have the most advantages?*

This will tell you which appliance you need. If you decide an electric skillet will most easily solve your cooking problem, you will also have a good idea of what features you need to make the purchase a good choice. Once you decide on a specific appliance, the purchase still needs to be made. You will be more satisfied with your final decision if you have carefully thought it through. You will feel the money for its purchase was well spent and you will no doubt enjoy the years of service its features provide.

Creative Uses of the Electric Skillet

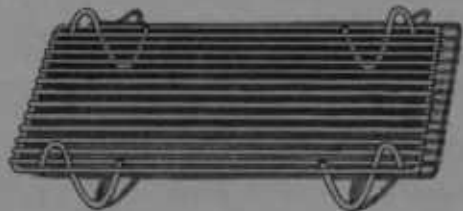
If a decision has been made to purchase an electric fry pan, you will want to assure yourself that getting one is an economical choice. Economy often means "practical use." As you think about "practical uses" of an electric fry pan, or skillet, you will want to know some basic information concerning its creative use. As portable ovens, they turn out delicious, moist coffee-cakes, brownies, upside down cakes, cottage puddings, cheese cakes, and light, fluffy cakes from your own recipe or the packaged mixes.

How to bake cakes

Method #1—Bake directly in the bottom of the fry pan

Cover fry pan, close vent, preheat to 280°. This can be done while mixing ingredients—it takes about 4 1/2 minutes. When preheated, grease well with unsalted shortening. Sprinkle lightly with flour, brush-

ing the flour and shortening mixture over the surface. Add batter, cover, bake until top of cake is no longer moist—about 35 minutes. Open vent the last 5 minutes of baking. Loosen well around the edges with a spatula. Invert on a cake rack. Let stand a few minutes before lifting off the fry pan. Cool. Layer cakes may be made by slicing the cake in half and frosting in layers. Cut into squares; cakes are convenient to use for short-cakes, or cottage puddings with a sauce, or other desert base.



Method #2—Bake on a rack using a cake pan

Use a low rack or trivet, not over 1/4 inch from the bottom of the fry pan. Preheat covered fry pan to 420° with vent closed. Prepare mixture as directed in recipe. Batter for a two layer cake would need to be divided since only one layer may be baked at a time. Pour into cake pans as directed. In general, layers take about 45 minutes. The vent should be opened for the last 5 minutes.

Note: Cakes may not be quite as brown on top as oven baked, but will be moist and tender. Bake until no longer moist and sticky on top and cake will spring back when lightly tested with finger. Let stand on cake cooler rack for about 5 minutes; then loosen edges and remove to cake plate.

Note: Do not use a cake pan that is too high to allow the lid to fit securely on the fry pan.

Popcorn

Preheat fry pan to 400°. Add 2 tablespoons salad oil; when very hot, add 1/2 cup popcorn. Stir until first kernels begin to pop. Cover fry pan. Shake back and forth; open vent to let excess steam escape. Turn dial to 420° when light goes out. When popping ceases, uncover and put desired amount of butter or margarine in fry pan; melt and stir into corn. Sprinkle with salt. Turn dial to warm to keep corn crisp and tasty while serving. Wipe out fry pan with paper towels before popping another batch.

Baking frozen meat and chicken pies

Place double thickness aluminum foil in bottom of fry pan allowing it to come partially up sides so as to catch any juice which may bubble over. Cover, preheat to 420°. When light goes out, place pies (packed in foil tins) directly on bottom. Cover, bake 40 to 50 minutes until bubbly and hot, (open vent last 10 minutes). Remove pies from fry pan and slip under broiler for a few minutes to finish browning; watch closely. Most fry pans hold 4 pies.

Cooking vegetables

Cook squash, corn on cob, asparagus, and other bulky vegetables in your fry pan, using the rack to steam cook rather than boiling them in the water. Add about ½ inch of water in bottom of fry pan. Bring to a boil at 300°, then cover, reduce temperature to simmering point. Simmer until vegetables are tender. Season.

Heating baby foods

Place foods in heat resistant custard cups or use opened self containers. Put 2 cups water in fry pan. Arrange cups or jars on rack in fry pan. Cover, close vent, set dial at 300° until water boils; then turn down to simmering point. Heat until food is warm as desired.

To keep foods warm

Set dial in warm temperature range. If foods are to be kept waiting a long time, use a rack in bottom of fry pan and set foods on this. Open vent on cover for foods which tend to become soggy.

To heat rolls, coffee cake, etc.

Place 4 layers of aluminum foil in bottom of fry pan; if packaged in foil, this is not necessary. Cover, preheat to 300°. Place rolls directly on foil or foil packaged ones directly on bottom. Heat with vent open 10 to 15 minutes. Rolls may also be placed on rack, with 2 tablespoons water in bottom of fry pan, cover, preheat to 420°. Heat rolls about 10 minutes.

Heating frozen tray dinners

When heating only one tray at a time, place tray on a rack after preheating covered fry pan to 420°. Cover, close vent, bake for time specified on label. When heating 3 or 4 trays, cut four pieces of aluminum foil to fit bottom of fry pan. Cover, preheat to 420°, with vent closed, pour ¼ cup water on foil. Place trays on top of each other, staggering so that they crisscross. Cover, bake 10 minutes. Uncover, switch top tray to bottom, alternating so that each tray is left on bottom for 10 minutes.

Chafing dish

Use the fry pan as a chafing dish, taking it directly to the table to keep foods hot or to prepare foods. For buffet, card, or picnic table, it is the easy way to serve. *The following recipes suggest methods of creative*

uses for your fry pan as a portable oven, pasta cooker, and in direct baking.

Quick and easy supper surprise

Illustrates use as a pasta cooker. Spaghetti cooks right in this skillet casserole—saves the step of boiling and draining.

1 lb. ground beef	2 cups fine dry noodles or spaghetti
1 cup chopped onion	½ lb. sliced American cheese
1 cup chopped celery	2½ cups stewing tomatoes (20 oz.)
1 small can chopped ripe olives	

Brown meat slightly in skillet—drain. Stir in onion and celery and season with salt and pepper to taste. Arrange remaining ingredients in layers as recipe lists. Rinse tomato can with 1/3 cup water and pour over skillet dish. Cover. Bring to boiling. Reduce temperature and simmer 30 minutes. Occasionally, remove cover and press pasta into liquid.

Serves 6.

Cheese cake

As a portable oven, try your fry pan for this.

Temp: 380°—preheated

Time: about 35 minutes

Makes: about 16 servings

Crust: Combine 1-1/3 cups graham cracker crumbs, 1/2 cup melted butter, 1/3 cup granulated sugar, 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon in small bowl. Mix thoroughly. Press mixture into 10" pie pan.

Filling:

2 eggs	Grated rind of 1/2 lemon
1/3 cup sugar	1-8 oz. plus 1-3 oz. package cream cheese, very soft
1-1/2 teaspoon vanilla	

Combine eggs, sugar, vanilla, and lemon rind in small mixer bowl. Beat on medium speed for 1 minute. Add cream cheese, a small amount at a time while beating each time until blended. After all has been added, beat 1/2 minute longer. Pour into crust, spreading evenly. Bake in preheated fry pan on a rack at 380° for 35 minutes, or until set, vent closed. Spread with:

Topping:

1 to 2 cups commercial sour cream, as desired
2 tablespoons sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla

Beat with a fork until blended and spread over cheese mixture. Cover, bake 5 minutes longer. Remove from skillet and cool. Cut into desired servings. Delicious topped with sweetened strawberries or a can of cherry pie filling.



Date honey bars

Yummy bar cookies baked in the skillet.

Temp: 280°

Time: about 30 minutes

Makes: about 4 dozen

1 cup sifted all-purpose flour	1/3 cup soft shortening
1 teaspoon baking powder	1 teaspoon vanilla
1/2 teaspoon salt	1 cup pitted dates, cut
3 eggs, unbeaten	1 cup nuts, chopped
1 cup strained honey	

Sift together flour, baking powder, and salt. Place eggs, honey, shortening, and vanilla in small mixer bowl. Beat on high speed 2 minutes. Add flour mixture and beat on low speed 1 minute. Add dates and nuts, beat 1/2 minute longer. Meanwhile, preheat fry pan. Grease well with unsalted shortening. Add batter, spreading to cover bottom evenly. Cover, close vent, bake until firm on top. Uncover, turn dial to off. Cool in fry pan, cut in squares. Remove with pancake turner. May be sprinkled with confectioner's sugar or frosted with thin lemon frosting.

Upside down cake

Baked in the skillet.

Temp. 255°

Time: 35 minutes

Makes: about 16 servings

Batter: Yellow cake mix or favorite plain cake recipe. Mix as directed on the package or in the recipe, fruit syrup or juice, drained from fruit can be used as liquid in the mix. Then prepare the bottom mixture.

Bottom mixture:

1/4 cup butter or margarine

1 cup light brown sugar, packed

2 1/2 cups fruit or 9 slices pineapple, drained

Use any desired fruit, such as canned sliced pineapple, canned peach halves, canned apricots, or pears. Set dial at 220°, add butter. When melted, add brown sugar, spread evenly over surface of pan. Arrange drained fruit over the sugar mixture. Nuts or other garnishes might be added, if desired. Spread batter evenly over fruit. Set dial at 255°. Bake 35 minutes or until dry on top with the lid on and the vent open. Loosen edges with spatula and invert onto a rack or tray. Let stand a few minutes, then lift fry pan. Serve warm or cold, garnished with whipped cream or served with ice cream.

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